THE RAVEN IN NORSE MYTHOLOGY AND PACIFIC NORTHWEST FOLKLORE

Jim Gritton
University of the Highlands and Islands

Structure of Presentation

- The common raven
- Cultural depictions of the raven
- The raven in Norse mythology
- The raven in Pacific Northwest folklore
- Common mythological themes
- Do they share a common mythological heritage?
- Bibliography
- Images used

The Common Raven aka *Corvus Corax*

- Largest member of the crow family (crows much smaller)
- Found extensively across the Northern Hemisphere
- Omnivore, including carrion
- Intelligent, problem solving
- Modern English word *raven* has cognates in all Germanic languages including Old Norse, viz. *hrafn*
- Powerful symbol in mythology and folklore…

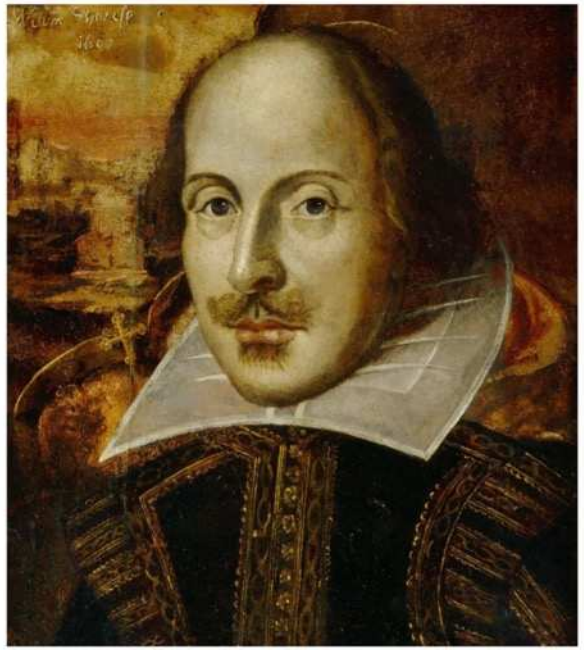
Cultural Depictions of the Raven

…in the United Kingdom

Ravens at the Tower of London

Dinas Brân: Castle of the Raven King

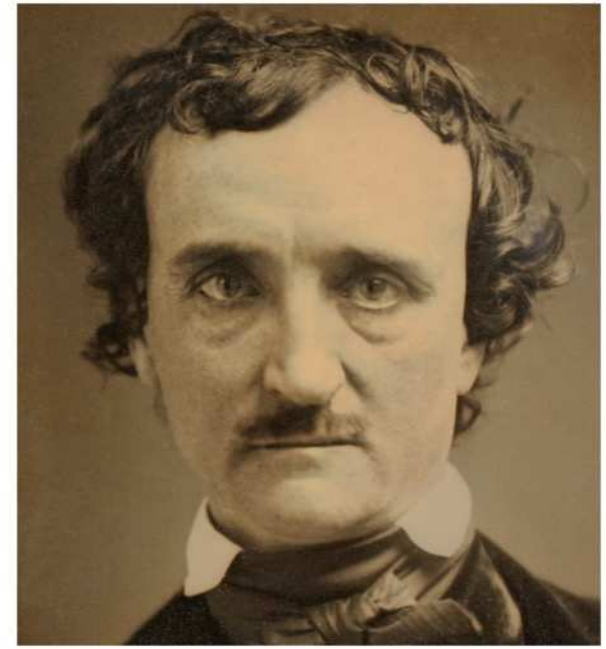
…and in literature and the arts…



Here is wisdom.
Let him that hath understanding
count the number of the beast;
for it is the number of a man;
and his number is 666
- Book of Revelation Chapter 13 Verse 18
DAMIEN
OMEN II
The first time was only a warning.

THE
RAVEN
KING
BOOK IV of THE RAVEN CYCLE

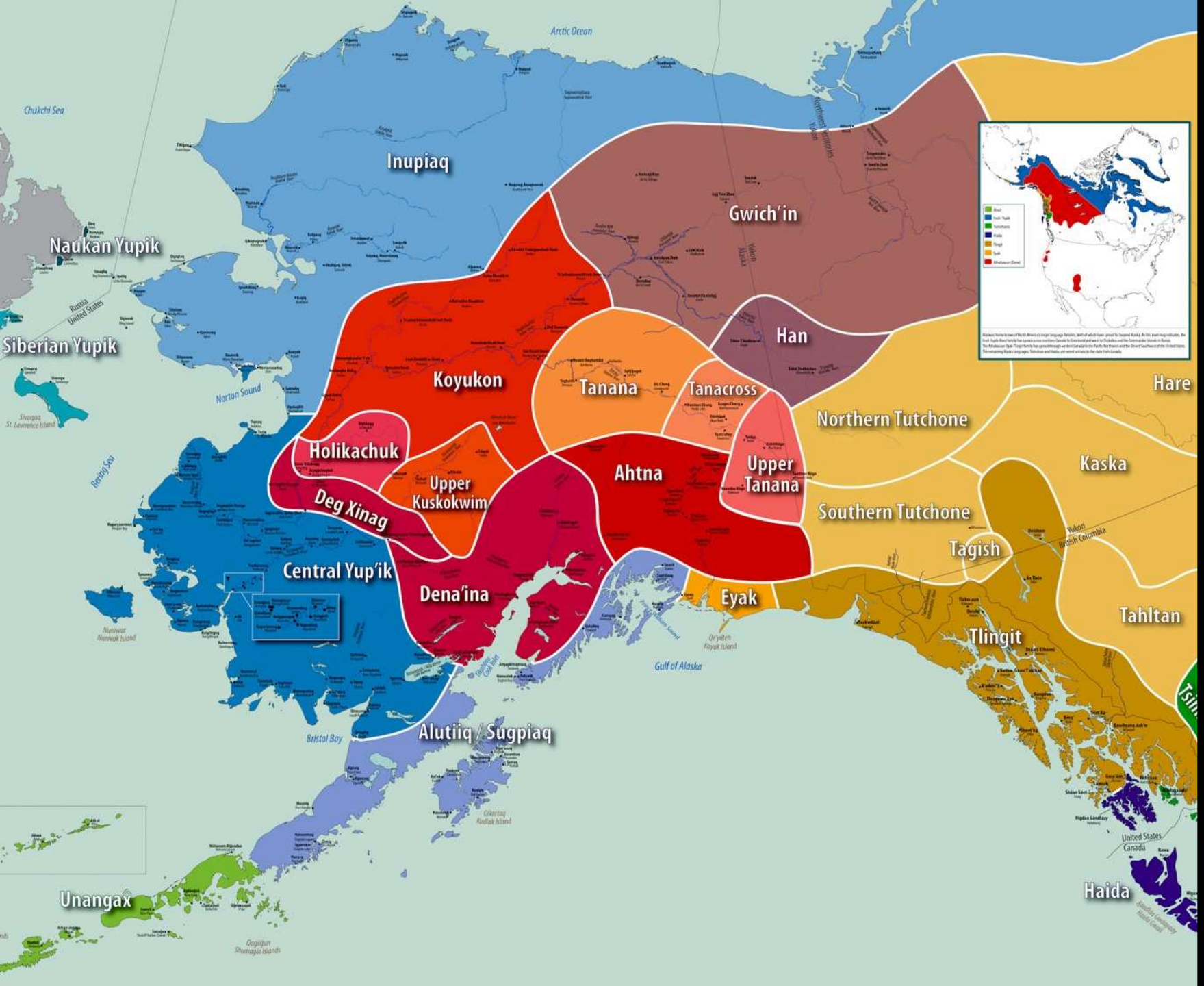
GAME OF THRONES



The Raven in Norse Mythology

Hrafnar tveir sitja á öxlum honum ok segja í eyru honum öll tíðendi, þau er þeir sjá eða heyra. Þeir heita svá: Huginn ok Muninn. Þá sendir hann í dagan at fljúga um heim allan, ok koma þeir aftr at dögurðarmáli. Þar af verðr hann margra tíðenda víss. Því kalla menn hann Hrafnaguð.

Snorri Sturluson's Prose Edda | Gylfaginning


Arctic Ocean
Chukchi Sea
Inupiaq
Naukan Yupik
Russia
United States
Siberian Yupik
Gwich'in
Han
Koyukon
Tanana
Tanacross
Hare
Northern Tutchone
Norton Sound
Sivuqaq
St. Lawrence Island
Holikachuk
Upper Kuskokwim
Ahtna
Upper Tanana
Kaska
Deg Xinag
Southern Tutchone
Bering Sea
Tagish
Central Yup'ik
Dena'ina
Eyak
Tahltan
Nunivak
Nunivak Island
Tlingit
Gulf of Alaska
Qe'yitteh
Koyuk Island
Alutiiq / Sugpiaq
Bristol Bay
Oikeriag
Kodiak Island
Unangax
Dagsijun
Shumagin Islands
Haida
United States
Canada

UNITED STATES
TLINGIT
CANADA
PACIFIC
OCEAN
TSIMSHIAN
HAIDA
BELLA COOLA
KWAKIUTL
NORTHWEST
COAST
NUU-CHAH-NULTH
COAST SALISH
CHINOOK
UNITED STATES

The Raven in Pacific Northwest Folklore (Cont'd)

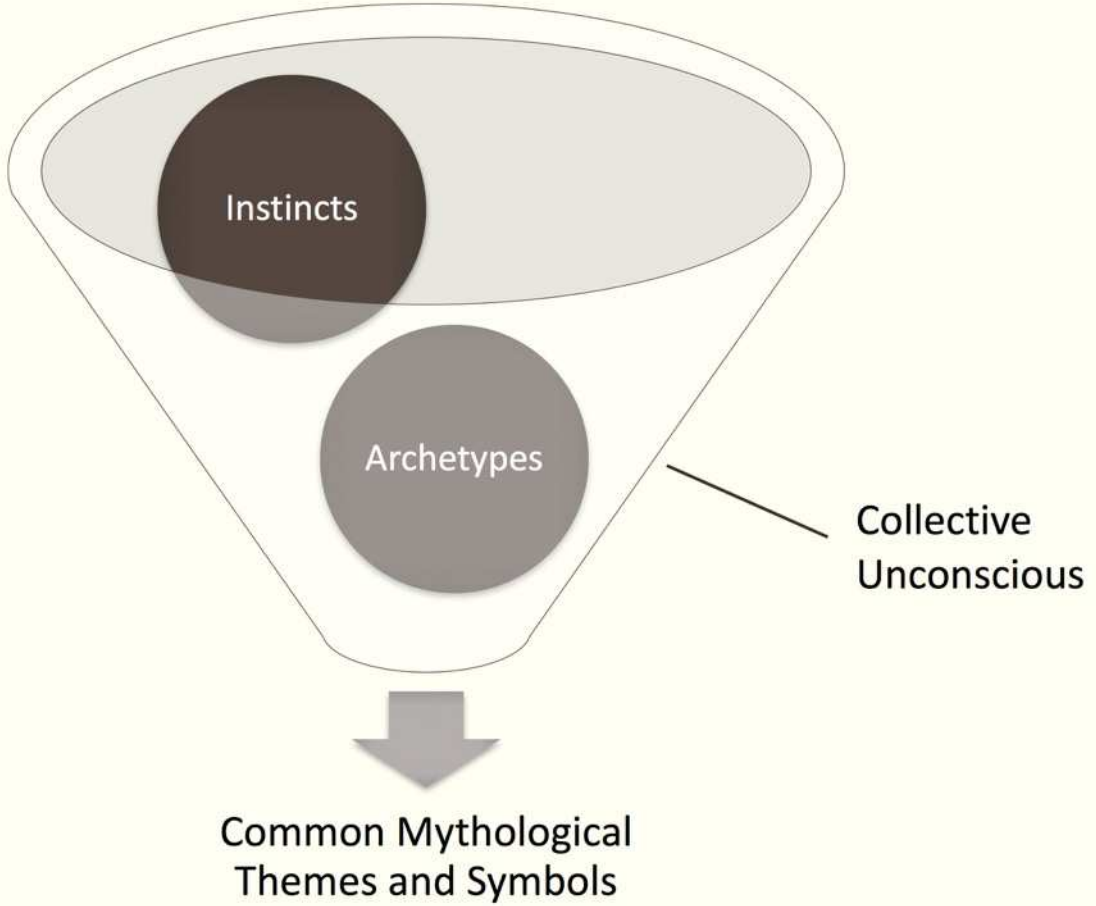
- Ubiquitous presence
- Creator, transformer
- Trickster
- Insatiable hunger
- Swaps black feathers for human garments at will
- Harbinger, prophetic beast
- Bearer of magic

Common Mythological Themes

Raven in Norse Mythology		**Raven in Pacific NW Folklore**
Odin's companions		
Odin’s shamanic avatars		Creator, transformer (Big Raven)
Birds of prophecy		Harbinger, prophetic beast
Shapeshifters		Swaps feathers for garments at will
Beast of the battlefield		Insatiable hunger (for carrion?)
Raven banners		Bearer of magic
		Trickster

Do They Share a Common Mythological Heritage?

- There are similarities between the mythologies of the Norse people and coastal Indians of the Pacific Northwest.
- Does this presuppose contact between them?
- Wacky theories abound, but there's no evidence of contact, so cultural transfer is improbable.
- Does Jung's theory of the collective unconscious offer another explanation?



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Images Used

Slide 1	Raven Spirit Animal	https://www.wildgratitude.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/raven-spirit-animal.jpg
Slide 3	The Common Raven	https://i.pinimg.com/originals/4d/1f/84/4d1f84a51f5889363594500d0db2aa4c.jpg
Slide 4	World Map	https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/c/cf/WorldMap-A_non-Frame.png
Slide 4	Raven Silhouette	https://d30y9cdsu7xlg0.cloudfront.net/png/683810-200.png
Slide 5	Tower of London Ravens	http://tinyurl.com/yb3f6e4z
Slide 5	Dinas Brân	https://flic.kr/p/dbeNYX
Slide 6	William Shakespeare	https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/3/31/William_Shakespeare_1609.jpg
Slide 6	Damian Omen II	http://tinyurl.com/ydfg96ue
Slide 6	Charles Dickens	https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/a/aa/Dickens_Gurney_head.jpg
Slide 6	The Raven King	http://www.bookpunks.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/raven.jpg
Slide 6	Game of Thrones Poster	http://tinyurl.com/ycb53jsp
Slide 6	The Grimm Brothers	https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/f/ff/Grimm.jpg
Slide 6	Tokyo Ghoul	http://tinyurl.com/y8yce9tu
Slide 6	Edgar Allan Poe	https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/8/84/Edgar_Allan_Poe_daguerreotype_crop.png
Slide 7	Odin (with Ravens)	https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/9/9f/Odin_%28Manual_of_Mythology%29.jpg
Slide 7	Vendel Helmet (with Ravens)	https://norse-mythology.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/Vendel-helmet.jpg
Slide 7	Extract from Bayeux Tapestry	http://tinyurl.com/ycudlvee
Slide 8	Indigenous Peoples of Alaska	http://www.uaf.edu/anla/collections/map/anlmap.png
Slide 8	Northwest Coast Culture	https://media1.britannica.com/eb-media/51/132351-004-E6B11530.jpg
Slide 9	Raven Totem 4378	https://flic.kr/p/4cdBbc
Slide 9	Spirit of Haida Gwaii	http://tinyurl.com/ycb3ts4g
Slide 9	Finding the Circle Again	http://tinyurl.com/yazanfsv

Thank You!

Jim Gritton
Institute for Northern Studies
University of the Highlands & Islands
Kiln Corner
Kirkwall
Orkney
KW15 1QX

www.linkedin.com/in/jimgritton